Your other suggestions are very interesting, and they will all be considered, as I said just now, in the attempts we are making to encourage industry to relieve depression and to reduce expenditure.

34. The present economic crisis in the State and some suggestions for its remedy.

MR. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Kottarakara taluk*) said that Travancore with the rest of the world was in a period of great economic distress and consequently the people were poverty stricken. Although this depression had been in existence for more than two years, the Government have not done anything to alleviate the distress of the people. Instances were not wanting where poverty stricken people were subjected to starvation. The officers in the State were paid higher than could be allowed having regard to the economic condition of the State. Comparatively they were being paid higher than in British India. In British India all the high paid officers have voluntarily allowed a cut in their salaries and certain other retrenchment measures have also been effected. In Travancore nothing of the kind was done.

The tax-payers found it difficult to pay the tax due by them. The Government also were convinced of this position of the ryots as otherwise they would not have allowed extension of time for paying the *kist*. But in spite of that no reduction of tax was made. A benign Government would certainly have remitted one year's tax and made up this amount by retrenching the salaries of officers.

The Retrenchment Committee in the State was appointed only very late. Elsewhere similar committees were appointed earlier and their recommendations had already been brought into effect. The progress in this respect in Travancore was very slow. The salaries of officers should therefore be retrenched without further delay and all superfluous offices and institutions abolished. The member hoped that the Dewan would set an example by allowing a voluntary cut of his own salary. He also suggested that the currency policy of the Government should be shaped to suit the present conditions and the money market controlled.

The following were the other suggestions made by him for reducing public expenditure and increasing revenue:—

(1) The Law College should be closed for ten years. The Arts and the Science Colleges should be amalgamated and placed under one Principal and the Training College also should be closed for 10 years. The Women's College and all special schools should be abolished. Departmental schools should be handed over to private management as far as possible. The Public Health and Sanitary Departments should be amalgamated. So also the Press and the Mint. The administration of the Medical Department by a board should be ended.

(2) The Government should pay greater attention to forest conservancy. Several articles obtained from reserved forests were not properly utilised. An expert should be appointed as an assistant to the

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Conservator of Forests to collect and utilise these articles to the best advantage of the Government. If this was not feasible, the work should be assigned to the Director of Industries.

(3) Swampy areas within reserved forests should be leased for cultivation under the control of the Director of Agriculture.

(4) Export duty should be levied on timber, cashew-nut and other articles which are duty free.

(5) Importation of motor vehicles and accessories and their sale should be controlled.

(6) The Government should take up the management of the Shencotta—Trivandrum railway.

(7) Stationary Magistrates' Courts should be abolished and the Tahsildars invested with magisterial powers.

(8) Whatever might be the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, salaries between Rs. 300 and Rs. 500 should be reduced by 15 per cent. and those above Rs. 500 by 20 per cent.

(9) Sirkar coins should be made equivalent to British Indian coins.

(10) Steps should be taken to find out proper markets for local products.

(11) Protection should be given to articles of local industry and the duty on imported articles should be increased.

(12) Local industries should be developed with the help of experts and industrial institutions should be established at different centres. Match making should be made a cottage industry. Locally made articles, especially articles of stationery, should alone be used by the Government.

(13) Additional funds should be provided for the grant of agricultural and industrial loans.

(14) The Experts in the Agricultural and the Industries Departments should either be disbanded or appointed to do any fresh and profitable works.

In conclusion, the member said that, in the Public Works Department, the Government instead of reducing the number of high paid officers reduced the number of *maistries*. This was hard.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Velayudhan Pillai, you made many far reaching suggestions, some of which are practical and some almost impracticable.

The question of reducing the salaries of officers has been raised by the Retrenchment Committee. That is now under the consideration of the Government.

That committee is suggesting also other means of reducing expenditure. We will do our best to adopt these proposals as far as possible without reducing efficiency or without throwing the administrative machinery into chaos.

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